

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation and a polarized country.

PBS aired a discussion of this Sinclair documentary last evening, and it seems to me representative of the ways in which people currently want their news packaged in ways that reflect their political opinions. If we fail to hold media corporations to standards of balance, we will lose our expectations of reliable broadcast news. When we package editorials as news we approach a community in which there is no longer any trustworthy information. We lose our ability to be in dialogue with each other when we each have only interpreted news from whichever side of the issue we inhabit. We rely on the FCC to defend this balance that is critical to a functioning democracy.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.